



**NORTHERN REGION
FAIRBANKS AREA FORESTRY**

**FOREST LAND USE PLAN AND
PRELIMINARY BEST INTEREST FINDING
FOR
MULLEN SLOUGH WEST
NC-1549-F
8/5/2014
ADL 420114**

Contents

I.	INTRODUCTION	3
A.	<i>Purpose</i>	3
B.	<i>Five-Year Sale Schedule</i>	3
C.	<i>Location</i>	3
D.	<i>Title, Classification and Other Active or Pending Interests</i>	3
E.	<i>General Timber Sale Program Objectives</i>	4
II.	LEGAL AUTHORITY	4
III.	ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD	4
IV.	SCOPE OF DECISION	5
V.	DISCUSSION OF ISSUES	6
A.	<i>Physical Characteristic of the Sale Area</i>	6
B.	<i>Historic and Current Land Use</i>	7
C.	<i>Wildlife Habitat</i>	7
D.	<i>Fisheries and Water Quality</i>	7
E.	<i>Subsistence</i>	8
F.	<i>Recreation and Tourism</i>	8
G.	<i>Scenic Resources</i>	8
H.	<i>Cultural Resources</i>	8
I.	<i>Sustained Yield and Allowable Cut</i>	9
J.	<i>Silvicultural Prescription</i>	9
K.	<i>Transportation</i>	10
L.	<i>Erosion</i>	11
M.	<i>Mining</i>	11
N.	<i>Materials</i>	11
O.	<i>Economics</i>	11
VI.	MARKET CONDITIONS	11
VII.	ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS	12
VIII.	PUBLIC NOTICE	13
IX.	PRELIMINARY FINDING AND DECISION	13

Prepared and recommended by: Kevin Meany, Resource Management Forester ----- 13

X. SIGNATURE ----- 13

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose

The purpose of this Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) is to provide sufficient information for reviewers to ensure that the best interest of the State will be served by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Forestry, Fairbanks Area, offering this proposed timber sale. This FLUP deals with site specific considerations of the sale. The boundaries and precise volume of the sale may be refined if and when the sale is developed. Site specific research has been completed on title considerations, land classifications, applicable land management plans, appropriate silvicultural techniques, regulatory and statutory requirements, and physical conditions that apply to the proposed sale area. The proposal is for the harvest of approximately (+/- 10%) 11.6 acres of land that is predicted to yield approximately (+/- 10%) 274 CCF of spruce sawtimber and 62 CCF of birch fuelwood. The sale design may be altered to mitigate potential conflicts. It will be the responsibility of the Forester-In-Charge to ensure that any purchaser of this sale harvests timber per the sale design and sale contract provisions and adheres to Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (AFRPA) best management practices.

B. Five-Year Sale Schedule

The general area and timber type that this proposed sale occupies has been shown as a potential sale area in the current Five-Year Schedule of Timber Sales (FYSTS) for Fiscal Years 2014-2018 as required by AS 38.05.113. It has been listed in previous schedules.

C. Location

The proposed sale is located 20 miles east of Fairbanks, within the Fairbanks North Star Borough and within the boundaries of the Doyon Region. Coastal Zone Management considerations do not apply. The sale area is located within Sections 7, 12, and 18, Township 1 South Range 4 East, Fairbanks Meridian. It is proposed to be located along the Chena River south of Chena Hot Springs Road utilizing the Pheasant Farm Rd as access. The sale area is shown on the attached map and is within the United States Geological Survey 1:63,360 Quadrangle map titled Big Delta D-6. The tract is accessed by driving east on Chena Hot Springs Road approximately 20 miles. At this point, turn south on the Pheasant Farm Rd and continue approximately 2.5 miles on existing secondary road. Then continue another mile along existing logging roads and trails at the end of which is a previously harvested timber sale. The sale boundary is approximately .1 miles to the south where secondary road access would be constructed along and north-south section line. No ice bridges would need to be constructed and the sale is designed for winter access, however dependent on conditions summer access may be possible at the discretion of the forester-in-charge.

D. Title, Classification and Other Active or Pending Interests

The acquisition for the land upon which the sale is proposed is based on the applicable State case file MH-29. The Patent Numbers are 50-75-0102 (11/6/1974) and 50-2007-0247 (2/22/2007), and thus subject to State management authority. There are no title restrictions

on the area. The land was acquired by the State under special entitlement of a Mental Health Grant. This land, however, was not transferred into Mental Health Trust property. The proposed sale area is within Unit 6 of the Tanana Valley State Forest (TVSF). Management intent for this area is more specifically addressed in the TVSF Management Plan. The primary land classification for the area is Forestry per Classification Order NC-82-065. There are no other special conditions or constraints noted in the TVSF Management Plan for this area.

E. General Timber Sale Program Objectives

1. Develop the State's Renewable Resources

To follow the DNR's constitutional mandate to encourage the development of the State's renewable resources, making them available for maximum use consistent with the public interest. Sustain and promote a healthy, long-term timber industry in the State, through providing a secure source of timber for harvest that produces raw materials for local manufacturing plants when practical while protecting other resources such as fish and wildlife.

2. Improve the State's Economy

To help the State's economy by providing royalties to the State in the form of stumpage receipts, as well as contributions to local economies through wages, purchases, jobs, and business.

3. Improve Forest Health

To improve forest growth and vigor by harvesting mature and or declining stands and replace them with new healthy regenerating stands. The stand replacement will be accomplished while protecting and maintaining other resource values. The actions authorized under this decision will follow the constitutional mandate of sustained yield and shall adhere to multiple use management as described in the Tanana Valley State Forest Management Plan.

4. Improve Wildlife Habitat

Meet the statutory wildlife management objectives for the TVSF (AS 41.17.400(e)) that provides for the economic development of other natural resources while protecting habitat needs of wildlife resources necessary to maintain or enhance public use and economic benefits.

II. LEGAL AUTHORITY

The Division of Forestry is taking this action under the authority of AS 38.05.035 (e) (Best Interest Finding); AS 38.05.110-120 (Alaska Land Act Statutes); 11 AAC 71 (Timber Sale Statutes and Regulations); AS 41.17.010-.950 and 11 AAC 95 (Forest Resources and Practices Statutes and Regulations).

III. ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD

The Division will maintain an administrative record regarding the decision of whether or not to proceed with the action as proposed. This record will be maintained at the DOF's Fairbanks Office filed as NC-1549-F.

IV. SCOPE OF DECISION

This preliminary best interest finding (PBIF) completes step three of a six-step process to design, sell, and administer timber sales. This PBIF covers the sale of approximately 11.6 acres of spruce sawtimber and birch fuelwood on state land in the Chena Hot Springs Rd area. The following list summarizes the overall process:

Step 1: Regional planning. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) develops area plans and state forest management plans to designate appropriate uses for state land, classify the land accordingly, and establish management guidelines for multiple use. These plans determine where timber sales are an allowed use, and what other uses must be considered when designing and implementing sales. Subsequent land use decisions must be consistent with the area plans. The area in this PBIF is covered by the Tanana Valley State Forest Management Plan, and the PBIF is consistent with this plan.

Step 2: Five-year Schedule of Timber Sales (AS 38.05.113). A proposed timber sale must appear in at least one of the two Five-year Schedules preceding the sale. The land covered by this PBIF appeared in the Fairbanks Area 5 Year Schedule of Timber Sales FY2014-2018.

Step 3: Best Interest Finding. DOF must adopt a final BIF before selling timber. A best interest finding is the decision document that:

- Establishes the overall area within which the timber sale may occur,
- Determines the amount of timber that will be offered for sale and the duration of the sale,
- Sets the overall harvest and reforestation strategy for the sale area,
- Determines whether the sale proposal complies with the Constitutional requirement to manage for sustained yield by evaluating the amount of timber in the sale and the annual allowable cut for the affected area,
- Selects the appropriate method of sale (i.e., competitive or negotiated sale), and
- Determines the appraisal method that will be used to determine the sale price.

DOF will issue a final BIF covering the decision to sell approximately 11.6 acres of spruce sawtimber and birch fuelwood from state lands within the Chena Hot Springs Rd area in a competitive sale for commercial use. DOF will consider all written comments received during the 30-day review period. A person affected by the final decision who provided timely written comment or public hearing testimony on the preliminary decision may appeal it, in accordance with 11 AAC 02.

Step 4: Forest Land Use Plans (AS 38.05.112). Prior to authorizing harvest of timber on any area greater than 10 acres, the DOF must adopt a site-specific Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) for the harvest area. DOF is issuing this draft FLUP concurrently with the PBIF and will adopt the final FLUP following review of comments. FLUPs specify the site, size, timing, and harvest methods for harvest units within the sale area. FLUPs also address site-specific requirements for access construction and maintenance, reforestation, and multiple

use management. FLUPs are based on additional field work, agency and community consultation, and site-specific analyses by the DOF, and are subject to public and agency review.

Step 5: Timber sales and contracts. Following adoption of the final BIF, and completion of the FLUP, DOF will offer the timber for sale by auctioning competitive sales and/or negotiating some sales with purchasers. The Division will sign a contract with the winning bidder for each sale. The contract will include stipulations to ensure compliance with the best interest finding, FLUP, and statutory requirements.

Step 6: Sale administration. DOF will administer the timber sale and conduct field inspections to ensure compliance with the final BIF, FLUP, timber sale contract, and applicable laws, including the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act and regulations (AS 41.17 and 11 AAC 95), and forest management statutes and regulations in AS 38.05 and 11 AAC 71.

V. DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

A. Physical Characteristic of the Sale Area

1. Topography

This site is located north of the river and west of the Mullen Slough, but within the Chena River flood plain at an elevation of about 600 feet. The terrain is flat with old meander sloughs and terrace features created from past floods and river bed movement.

2. Soils

Soils in the sale area are classified as the Salchaket Series and the Goldstream-Lemeta Association. Salchaket soils are productive bottomland alluvial soils consisting of nearly level, stratified silty and sandy material over a substratum of water-deposited gravel and sand. Depth to the substratum ranges from less than a foot, to over six feet. They are well-drained soils that originated from water-deposited material along the Chena River. Goldstream-Lemeta Association soils occur in former stream channels and other depressions. Goldstream silt loam and Lemeta peat are poorly drained soils underlain by permafrost.

3. Waterbodies

The two predominate water bodies in the vicinity are the Chena River (Type III-A) to the south and the Mullen Slough (Type III-A) to the west. A “no cut” buffer averaging 100 feet or greater would be designed into the unit along the slough and the river. There will not be any partial harvest within these buffers. The timber sale is anticipated to have minimal impact on water quality, due to the location of the proposed units in relationship to surface waterbodies. The sale area presents no obstacles that would prevent implementation of the best management practices of the AFRPA to maintain water quality.

4. Stand Conditions

The timber stand and harvest unit consist of even-aged white spruce 125 years and older mixed with similar aged birch of 122 years and older. Birch trees are present in pockets primarily on the western half of the sale and most likely became established as a result of flood events that created openings in the stand as well as significant past selective logging in the area. White spruce establishment is likely of flood origin due to the stand's proximity to the Chena River. Site productivity is high for the Interior and some of the spruce trees are over 100 feet in height. Spruce health is generally good though some butt rot is typical in floodplain stands similar to this.

Within the proposed sale area alder is common and covers about 50% of the sale area. The moss depth averages 3-5 inches. There is an estimated 10% defect in the white spruce. The white spruce sawtimber component of the stand $\geq 9''$ diameter breast height (dbh) has about 64 trees/acre, an average dbh of 15'' and an average height of 88'. Basal area per acre is 84.21 square feet/acre. The birch fuelwood component $\geq 6''$ dbh has about 45 trees/acre, an average dbh of 10'' and an average height of 63'. Basal area for the birch estimates at 52 square feet/acre.

B. Historic and Current Land Use

The historic uses of land in the general area have been agriculture, logging, firewood cutting, dog mushing, hunting and trapping. As was mentioned above, a significant amount of past harvest occurred in the area over many years. The current uses of the area are recreation (primarily snow-machining and dog mushing), hunting and trapping.

C. Wildlife Habitat

Wildlife typical of the interior are found here and during ground reconnaissance tracks and sign of squirrels and moose were observed. On two occasions during the field work moose was spotted in the Mullen Slough. There are no known raptor nests within the proposed sale area. Critical nesting habitat for peregrine falcons has been identified in addition to the critical spawning and rearing habitat for salmon within Unit 6 of the TVSF (TVSF Management Plan). Should an eagle nest tree be discovered in the sale area, the nest tree will be marked on the ground and a 330 foot no-harvest radius will be established to protect the nest tree.

Treatments proposed for this stand are projected to enhance habitat conditions for ruffed grouse, moose, voles, hares, and ultimately, lynx, marten and fox. In the past, Alaska Department of Fish and Game have recommended managing for as much diversity as possible when prescribing harvest unit size, shape and position to mimic the results of wildfire or other stand replacement phases such as insect outbreaks or flood events. To accomplish these objectives clumped snags will be retained to provide late-successional wildlife habitat for hole nesting birds, woodpeckers, small mammals, and other species requiring perching habitat. Units will be laid out with uneven edges, along and between timber types. This will create varied edge effect beneficial to many wildlife species.

D. Fisheries and Water Quality

Best management practices will be implemented to ensure water quality standards in all water courses. During review of the FY 2006-2010 FYSTS OHMP commented that this area of the Chena River between Two Rivers and the Chena River Recreation Area provides critical year-round habitat for anadromous and high value resident fish. Type III-A riparian standards that require 100' buffers along these channels will be implemented. While fish populations are always a consideration, there is no reasonable expectation that operations on this level will have deleterious effects on fish habitat in the Chena River or its associated tributaries.

E. Subsistence

The tract has not been designated as a subsistence zone. The proposed sale of timber is anticipated to have no deleterious effects on subsistence activities. Subsistence activities of fishing, trapping, hunting and gathering of berries and other non timber forest products may occur on State owned lands.

F. Recreation and Tourism

Recreation use of this area is fairly high, but not inconsistent with this timber sale as proposed. The most common recreational activity in the area is seasonal and in the form of dog mushing and snow-machining. Hunting, and trapping are popular in the area as well.

Moose, ruffed and spruce grouse, and bear hunting are popular seasonal activities in the general area. The Division of Forestry is not aware of any commercial tourism operations within or near the proposed sale area. Some commercial rafting/canoe outfits are likely utilizing the Chena River, but it is unknown of the extent of use in this area that is downriver of the popular Chena River Recreation Area. Operators of motorized boats use the Chena in this area as well.

There are recreational cabins both upstream and down of the sale area. With the proposed sale layout conforming to AFRPA Region III Riparian Standards ("no cut" buffers averaging 100 feet or greater), these users will mostly be unaffected.

As trail use in the area is fairly high, the all-season and winter road routes will be constructed and plowed in such a manner so as not to block cross trails. Where existing winter roads are needed for access, sufficient snow cover will be left on the road to enable winter recreational use.

G. Scenic Resources

Visual impact from the sale will be low. Chena Hot Springs Road, a major transportation route locally important to the tourism industry, is far enough away and at low enough elevation so as not to be in eyesight of the sale. The 100 foot buffer near the Chena River, and flat topography, will screen the harvest activity from the river itself. Also, most of the sale borders the Mullen Slough and receives little boating use

H. Cultural Resources

The TVSF Management Plan does not list any historic cultural or archaeological sites in the vicinity of the proposed harvest. The State Office of History and Archaeology

(OHA) list no sites on its inventory and during their review of the FY 2014-2018 FYSTS had no comment on this sale. During the course of activities associated with this timber sale, cultural and/or paleontological resources may be inadvertently discovered. Should such discovery occur, these sites shall be protected from further disturbance and OHA contacted immediately so that compliance with state laws governing cultural resources may begin.

Under the Alaska Historic Preservation Act (AS 41.35), all burials on state land are protected. If burials or human remains are found, all land altering activities that would disturb the burial or remains shall cease and measures taken to protect it in place. OHA and a law enforcement officer will be notified immediately to ensure that proper procedures for dealing with human remains are followed.

I. Sustained Yield and Allowable Cut

The Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (AS 41.17.060 (c)) and Article VIII Sec. 4 of the State Constitution require that the State forest land be managed on a sustained yield basis. Sustained yield is defined in the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (AS 41.17.950(25)):

“Sustained Yield” means the achievement and maintenance in perpetuity of a high level annual or regular periodic output of the various renewable resources of forest land and water without significant impairment of the productivity of the land and water, but does not require that timber be harvested in a non-declining yield basis over a rotation period.

The Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) is the amount that can be harvested from forest land managed for forestry purposes in a year under sustained yield management. The AAC in the Fairbanks Area is outlined in the publication Timber Inventory of State Forest Lands in the Tanana Valley (Hanson, 2013). This sale complies with sustained yield/allowable cut principles outlined in the Fairbanks Area Five-Year Schedule of Timber Sales for FY 2014-2018. The AAC for the Fairbanks Management Area is approximately 4,606 acres. The AAC will not be exceeded for this proposed sale.

J. Silvicultural Prescription

1. Stand Silvics

The merchantable tree species here are white spruce, birch, aspen, and balsam poplar. Data and research on regeneration and growth characteristics of these species are compiled within the Resource Analysis of the Tanana Valley State Forest (TVSF) Management Plan. The harvest and reforestations systems available in Interior Alaska are also reviewed and listed in the Resource Analysis. The results of the public and agency discussions for harvest and reforestation are discussed in the TVSF Management Plan. Silvicultural harvest systems that facilitate even-aged (natural) management are generally preferred. They mimic the ecological impact of wildfire and other disturbances and result in the greatest increase in site productivity. Even-aged management is normally accomplished through clear-cuts, patch cuts, and heavy partial cuts (such as seed tree or shelterwood systems) which open up the site to maximum solar gain. This management system results in the greatest production of both young hardwood, that is important to wildlife, and the spruce understory which

is valuable years later as timber. Even-aged management techniques are utilized to provide young, vigorously growing stands in juxtaposition to older, undisturbed stands. Such placement of harvest units can optimize natural seeding and the edge effect.

2. Specific Management Objectives

Attempt to create a diversity of forest age classes in the area and improve forest vigor. Open up the stand to sunlight and create soil warming to increase site productivity. Utilize the current commercial value of this timber stand before disease results in further loss of timber. Attempt to improve vigor by replacing the aging older white spruce with younger faster growing trees. White spruce smaller than 9 inches as well as birch smaller than 6 inches would be reserved from harvest and would serve as future crop trees in any subsequent entry to the stand. Those trees that are younger, rather than just smaller, may benefit from release. Maintain or enhance the current level of recreational use in the area. Meet the statutory wildlife management objective for within the TVSF (AS 41.17.400(e)). Return the site to a productive, naturally even-aged, diverse mixed-species stand at an equal or greater basal area than currently exists. It is reasonable to assume that these objectives will be realized under the recommended prescription with some supplemental planting of white spruce if necessary.

3. Harvest Methods

The sale will be harvested through a clear cut with reserves silvicultural system of all white spruce nine inches and greater as well as birch 6 inches and greater. Snags and all balsam poplar will not be cut. Residual trees will be protected from damage during harvest operations. Harvesting will be by the whole tree yarding system. Slash disposal at the landings will be by burning or by salvage for fuelwood use.

4. Regeneration

Regeneration of white spruce occurs only from seeds. White spruce trees generally produce some level of seed crop every three to five years and large seed crops every five to seven years. During ground recon, a large cone crop was observed in many of the spruce. The adjacent uncut spruce in this stand is quite tall and is expected to provide a significant seed source. Residual balsam poplar and birch will provide additional seedfall to supplement stocking of spruce. A regeneration survey will be conducted three years after any harvest. If the survey indicates inadequately stocked areas greater than ½ acre and totaling 2 acres then hand planting of white spruce seedlings will be performed on non-stocked areas.

K. Transportation

The planned access to the proposed sale is seasonal (winter), however it will be up to the forester-in-charge to determine if access in the summer is possible. It begins on the Pheasant Farm Rd off of Chena Hot Springs Road. At this point, turn south on the Pheasant Farm Rd and continue approximately 2.5 miles on existing secondary road. Then continue another mile along existing logging roads and trails at the end of which is a previously harvested timber sale. The sale boundary is approximately .1

miles to the south where secondary road access would be constructed. No ice bridges would need to be constructed. The ground here is mostly level and road construction would be relatively easy and a short distance. The road will be maintained to the standards set out in the AFRPA.

L. Erosion

There are two soil erosion concerns: surface erosion and mass wasting of soil and debris. Road construction and poor maintenance of roads primarily causes surface erosion. To avoid erosion, debris will be placed back onto skid trails and water bars installed if necessary. Harvesting will be suspended during periods of thawing soil conditions to assure there is minimal soil disturbance. The location of skid trails will optimize skidding distances and provide for adequate landing areas. The presence of uncut strips of timber along the Chena River and sloughs will filter and contain any runoff that may occur. The other aspect of erosion (mass wasting and debris avalanches) normally occurs on slopes of more than 70 percent and therefore is not a concern in this level area.

M. Mining

This sub-unit of the TVSF has moderate mineral potential. More detailed information on subsurface resource use is found in the TVSF Management Plan. Other than providing access, and sharing some of the same access roads, this sale will have no impact on the potential mining resources or mining activity in this area.

N. Materials

No rock materials will be required for the construction of access roads.

O. Economics

In addition to generating royalties to the State's general fund, the proposed sale will create economic benefits to the Fairbanks North Star Borough, the Community of Nenana, and to other locations in Alaska. The Borough business community will receive direct economic benefits from providing support services for the operators through sales of fuel, food, housing, medical and miscellaneous supplies. The sale is expected to benefit the local economy by providing jobs. The residents of the Borough will receive an indirect benefit through taxes paid to cities and the Borough by the operator and employees during the course of the timber harvest operation.

The sale is expected to benefit the local economy by providing jobs. It will have a positive impact on local employment by generating significant man-hours of work associated with the harvest and transportation of wood products from this sale.

Additionally the public may benefit from access to additional personal use fuel wood areas.

VI. MARKET CONDITIONS

Interior Alaska has a growing demand for biomass and firewood and a sustainable market for saw timber. Heating oil continues to be more costly in the interior than the national average therefore residents are looking for an alternative and the only affordable one is wood. Local businesses are currently producing wood pellets as an alternative to traditional firewood. This market addresses an ongoing air quality issue in the Fairbanks

area because these manufactured pellets produce almost no emissions. As this market continues to grow, the demand for material will increase. Other businesses are also looking into the use of biomass as a feedstock for producing electricity and heating alternatives in rural Alaska.

With improvements in wood stove technology for reducing emissions, firewood is also a viable alternative to high cost heating oil. The demand for firewood has steadily increased in the past few years and will likely continue to increase. Local suppliers of firewood continue to have a demand for accessible timber sales to deliver their product.

Residential construction and commercial operations throughout Alaska still need sawn products to support their operations. Local businesses that produce these products continue to pay for the delivered material.

These three markets create jobs in the forest products industry. Loggers, log truck drivers, commercial firewood cutters and mill workers all benefit from a sustainable timber market. This sale will provide the material needed to sustain these industries. As the economy continues to rebound there will be more demand for the products that this sector of the labor force provides.

VII. ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS

After a review of the material and information discussed above, the following alternatives have been considered:

1. To continue the sale(s) as proposed.

This alternative meets the objectives of the Five-Year Schedule of Timber Sales and DNR'S constitutional mandate. It also meets the silvicultural objective of improving forest vigor, provides for a value-added end product and creates additional jobs in Alaska due to the combination of road building, logging, and trucking. This alternative also complies with the management objectives of the TVSF Management Plan for Unit 6 which supports the issuance of small sized timber sales, continued recreational use and the consideration of private landowners as they relate to the type and location of roads.

2. To modify the sale(s) by making them smaller or larger.

The proposed sale unit is a logical setting for typical commercial logging equipment in Interior Alaska. The size of the sale is designed to be large enough to be economically viable considering access development and mobilization costs and distance to processing facilities. Sales of this size are appropriately balanced to maintain other resource values as well as provide economic benefits to the Tanana Valley.

3. Defer the sale of this timber to a later date.

Deferring harvest to a later date would fail to meet many of the objectives of the sale program. One of the main objectives is to make State-owned timber consistently available to the timber industry.

4. **Do not offer this timber for sale.**

This alternative would result in not meeting any of the objectives outlined for this management action. Utilization of the forest resource would not be achieved. There would be no significant contribution to the State and local economies. This alternative would delay the management objectives planned for the area, deny making a source of raw materials available to the local wood products industry, and would delay the harvest of mature trees, prior to the onset of disease or insect infestation.

VIII. PUBLIC NOTICE

The preliminary best interest finding and decision are to be publicly noticed in compliance with AS 38.05.945. Notice will be posted on the Alaska Online Public Notice System as well as both physical and electronic mailing lists.

IX. PRELIMINARY FINDING AND DECISION

After due consideration of all pertinent information and alternatives, the DNR has reached the following preliminary decision: To offer for sale approximately 11.6 acres of spruce and birch to provide sawtimber and fuelwood as proposed in Alternative 1. The DOF finds that this preliminary decision satisfies the objectives stated in this document and it is in the best interest of the State to proceed with this action under its authority of AS 38.05.035(e) (Powers and Duties of the Director) & AS 38.05.110-120; 11 AAC 71 (Timber Sale Statutes and Regulations; and AS 41.17.010-.950 and 11 AAC 95 (Forest Resources and Practices Statutes and Regulations).

Prepared and recommended by: Kevin Meany, Resource Management Forester

X. SIGNATURE

Kathryn Pyne, Fairbanks Area Forester
Alaska Division of Forestry

Date

